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4 February 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Secretary, IAC Ad Hoc Committee on Exchanges

SUBJECT: Possible Geographical Exchange

1. The Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Geography, consisting of the following members:

25X1A9a Dr. John G. Adams.....Army
[REDACTED].....CIA
Captain Charles Copas.....Air Force
Mr. Warren C. Crump.....Navy
25X1A9a Dr. G. Etzel Percy.....State
[REDACTED].....CIA

met on the 27th and 31st of January 1958 to study a proposed exchange of geographers between the U.S. and the USSR. The proposal was originated by G. Etzel Percy, Geographer, Department of State, and Chauncy Harris, Dean, Division of Social Sciences, University of Chicago.

2. The Subcommittee reviewed the proposal, assessed the intelligence gain, and prepared a report with suggestions and modifications for your consideration.

3. The Subcommittee drew upon the services of:

[REDACTED].....CIA
Mr. Ralph Foley.....Army
Mr. Robert M. Leonard.....USAF
Major Robert W. Smith.....USAF

25X1A9a

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4 - [REDACTED] (5 Feb 58)

4 - Copas (7 Feb 58)

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AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEE FOR GEOGRAPHY

Review of Intelligence Aspects of a Geographical
Exchange with the USSR

1. Background

Geography in the Soviet Union commands a very high position. Academic and applied work in geography are very closely related and utilized to the maximum by the government in the development of its economic and military programs. Geographers participate in planning at all levels, both urban and rural. The broad expanse of the USSR has enabled Soviet geographers to engage in research and field work ranging from environmental conditions affecting Northern Sea Route operations to desert irrigation in Central Asia and New Lands agriculture. Intensive work in systematic geography has given them a wealth of knowledge in soil science and climatology. Geographers are participating in the large-scale Soviet mapping program both as members of the field mapping teams and in performing high-level cartographic work at the various institutes.

The magnitude and significance of geographic activity in the USSR is reflected in the large number of practicing geographers and the large number of institutions at which intensive training and geographic work is being carried on. Of 34 universities in the Soviet Union, 28 have some program in geography, mostly in separate geographical faculties. The largest of these, the Geography Faculty of the University of Moscow, occupies six stories in the new university building and has about a hundred rooms for laboratories, offices, workrooms, and a staff of 300 professors, docents, and assistants. There are 1,000 full-time day students in the five-year geography course, 817 evening students, and 55 graduate students. The Geography Faculty is composed of 14 departments: physical geography of the USSR, economic geography of the USSR, polar geography, soil geography, physical geography of foreign countries, economic geography of the bloc countries, economic geography of capitalist countries, general geography, geomorphology, hydrology of the land, oceanography, climatology and meteorology, biogeography, and geodesy and cartography. Their contract research program includes: (1) Regionalization of the Soviet Union for Gosplan; (2) Evaluation of land resources for the Ministry of Agriculture; and (3) Snow and ice investigations in connection with the International Geophysical Year.

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The Institute of Geography of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR has a staff of about 300 engaged in full-time research. The Institute maintains four field stations: one near Moscow, one in the northern Urals, one on Novaya Zemlya, and one in the Tian'-Shan'. It also has a large publications program and conducts most international contacts for the procurement of all U.S. geographic publications, as well as those of other countries. In addition, there is the Institute of Scientific Information and the All-Union Geographical Society, both of which have intensive programs.

Individual Soviet geographers are found in numerous responsible positions of government work. For example, S. A. Striganov, the present Charge of the Soviet Embassy in Washington, is a geographer by training. S. A. Kovalov is a member of the committee formulating plans for the new Soviet census.

II. Net Intelligence Advantage

The proposed exchange of geographers between the United States and the USSR has the potential of being of net intelligence advantage to the United States. This is obviously dependent upon the freedom to observe areas of intelligence significance.

The importance of field observation bears examination because of the important role it plays in assessing relative intelligence gains of the two participants. Field study or field observation is an essential ingredient of the professional geographer's methodology. Because of his reliance upon this method, he must of necessity develop an acute ability to assess not only what appears in a region, but also the extensive relationships which are inevitably present. This is in contrast to other exchange team efforts, which tend to be more specialized.

United States geographers participating in the exchange would be able to undertake observation of the most complex of geographic relationships and provide an analysis which would be beneficial to United States intelligence. It so happens that the areas in the USSR of great importance to intelligence are also of great professional interest to geographers. The role of observation is of enhanced value to the U.S. participants in this particular exchange because of the relative scarcity of USSR published information. Conversely, USSR geographic observation in the United States would, for the most part, be confirmation of an abundance of published materials already in their possession.

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A. Potential U.S. Gains

In examining the essential ingredients of the exchange that would lead to a potential intelligence gain for the United States, the following items seem to have some significance:

1. Because visits to research institutes, academies, and organizations in Moscow and Leningrad would undoubtedly take place, it would be possible for United States geographers to assess the role of geography in its application to government, public works, commerce and industry, and in a purely academic, scientific way. Some insight would be gained concerning the research emphasis by the Soviets in their geographic studies by observation of the kinds of projects being done in support of government activity as opposed to basic scientific development.
2. Our team could probably gain a little more insight into the relationship of the geographic effort to the whole field of cartography, and possibly add bits and pieces of information about this highly controlled related field. Procurement of any geophysical (geodetic, gravitational, magnetic) or cartographic data would be of considerable value to the entire U.S. intelligence community and would, therefore, constitute a net gain to the United States.
3. Other items of potentially procurable information would be: the size of the Russian effort; the character of research; the quantity, quality and coverage; and the amount of research devoted to national projects versus international or foreign (especially the amount devoted to the United States). Our team would probably become aware of the degree of integration of geography into the governmental process and the acceptance of geography as a contributing discipline in various applied fields of utilization.
4. We could assume that the United States geographers would be able to assess the comparative achievements in techniques, methodology, and substance in all of the fields of geographic work. Certainly their broad contact with a number of earth scientists would enable them to acquire a more thorough understanding of the quantity and quality of the Soviet research effort.
5. Also, discussions with individual geographers would yield information not included in formal literature. Personal contact would undoubtedly yield biographic information on key individuals, leading to our future assessment of the significance of their personnel assignments to areas, projects, or institutions.

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6. The more purely scientific character of a large part of the geographic research effort in the United States would be demonstrated and thereby dispel notions that American geographers are engaged in "imperialist" programs. This would lead to the establishment of closer professional rapport. Out of this could come increased relaxation on factual data in Soviet geographic literature.

7. The value of observation of physical, cultural and economic phenomena -- when specifically related to areas to be covered by the proposed itinerary -- becomes of significant intelligence value to the United States.

B. Potential Soviet Gains

1. The Soviet geographers, in visiting normally denied areas of interest in the United States, would in essence be revisiting those areas which could have been already systematically covered by Soviet-affiliated travelers. Their observations would be confirmations of reports made by other observers.

2. Even though the Soviet geographers have thus far expressed an interest in TVA, dry-land agriculture, and other public-works projects, their observation of other areas through extended travel could lead to the identification and selection of targets for further exploitation in this country. By and large, we feel that USSR observations would be confirmation of written materials which they have received in great quantities and in wide coverage. They would have the opportunity of close examination of U.S. developments in various fields of applied geographic research.

3. They would have the opportunity to develop professional contact with a great number of American geographers, especially if their visit coincides with the national meetings of the Association of American Geographers. Points of contact would thus be established for future exchange of published materials and information. Discussions with American geographers would yield little information of value not contained in published sources.

4. The Soviets would undoubtedly gain a better understanding of the function and relative importance of geography in government, industry, and academic activities. They could make comparisons and recognize the lack of depth of U.S. geographic work in its application to the public interest and the limited extent of basic theoretical work in the earth sciences. The lack of U.S. Government

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support to the geographic approach by comparison with their own status would become obvious if they were allowed to visit government offices. They might discern weaknesses in U.S. governmental research because of the failure at all times to apply geographic knowledge to political and military activities.

5. The geographic profession in the Soviet Union would gain increased recognition of its professional status, and this would materially aid the Soviets in their recent endeavors to establish themselves more firmly in international professional geographic circles.

C. Balance

A comparison of the potentialities for gain to be derived from the exchange leads to the conclusion that the net gain would unquestionably be in favor of the United States. A condition to this conclusion is the accessibility of the areas or the suggested alternate areas in the USSR for observation.

III. Scope

The proposal -- as defined in general terms by Drs. Chauncy Harris and Etzel Percy in the documents supplied to this subcommittee, subject to more definition and minor refinements -- appears to provide an exchange situation of value to U.S. intelligence. The subcommittee feels that the greater the number of participants from the United States, up to a maximum of ten, the greater the value to be derived from our participation. We also favor an itinerary which would emphasize areas of major intelligence interest and to that end our suggested itinerary in the USSR differs slightly from the original proposal. We would not favor a division of the group into smaller units for the purpose of more diversified coverage, because we believe one large group is less subject to evasive, delaying or shunting tactics than several smaller groups. The proposed schedule of time seems restrictive from the point of view of maximum coverage of areas of intelligence interest. We would encourage the negotiation of an itinerary based upon a 50-to-60 day span rather than the 45 days in the original proposal. In order that U.S. geographers derive maximum benefit from field observation, they should travel in the USSR anytime from May through the first two weeks of August. USSR geographers, to attend the meetings of the Association of American Geographers in Los Angeles, August 19-22, could arrive in the U.S. about the middle of August and stay through September and into October. The suggested itineraries are based on this timing.

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IV. Personnel

We would encourage the selection of a delegation best able to accomplish the diversified objectives of such an exchange. The participants should be well known professionally by virtue of their research, publications, or other significant activity. The team should be constituted primarily from academic and research personnel. We should like to see several excellently qualified geographers from the U.S. Government named as participants. They are included in our suggested list which follows:

Chauncy D. Harris
Professor of Geography and Dean,
Division of the Social Sciences,
University of Chicago.
President, Association of American
Geographers.

Richard J. Russell
Professor of Geography and Dean,
Graduate School, Louisiana State University.
Formerly Chairman, Division of Geology and
Geography, National Research Council.

Charles B. Hitchcock
Director, American Geographical Society.

Richard Hartshorne
Professor of Geography,
University of Wisconsin.

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Geographer, U.S. Government.

John Q. Adams
Geographer, Army Map Service.

Paul Siple
Department of Defense.
U.S. Antarctic expeditions.

Edward L. Ullman
Professor of Geography,
University of Washington.

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Gilbert White
Professor of Geography,
University of Wisconsin.

Arthur Robinson
Professor of Geography,
University of Wisconsin.

Etsel Percy
Geographer, Department of State.

ALTERNATES:

Joseph A. Russell
Professor of Geography,
University of Illinois.

Preston E. James
Professor of Geography,
Syracuse University.

J. Warren Nystrom
Manager, International Department,
Chamber of Commerce of the United States.

Phillip Kissan
Princeton University.

V. Suggested Itinerary in the USSR*

MOSCOW..... 3 days 1, 2, 4
Main center of geographic research. Visit to uni-
versities, institutes, laboratories.

LEWINGRAD AND BALTIC..... 4 days 6, 7, 8
Center of Arctic research, Northern Sea Route
Administration, geographic research center.
Coastal areas.

*Times given include travel time.

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*MURMANSK and area..... 5 days 14
Frontier area for agriculture, mining and industry
-- port, naval base.
[ALTERNATE AREA: Molotovsk-Archangel -- 5 days.]

*URALS..... 8 days 9, 10, 11
Industrial area -- centers of research and industry.
[No alternate area acceptable; diminished activity possible.]

*KUZNETSK - ANGARA - IRKUTSK..... 15 days
Major center of heavy industry, large hydroelectric projects.
[No alternate area for Angara-Irkutsk, Kuznetsk area could be dropped in negotiation.]

*YAKUTSK and TIKSI..... 5 days
Research station of Academy of Sciences. Problems of agriculture in area of permafrost. Major IGY center.
[ALTERNATE AREA: Nagadan and Kolyan Valley -- 5 days.]

New Lands Area in SIBERIA and KAZAKHSTAN..... 4 days
Large investment in area of recurring droughts.
[ALTERNATE AREA: The Caucasus -- 4 days.]

TASHKENT and SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA..... 6 days 13
Irrigation, cotton, deserts, mountain and glacial research stations of the Academy of Sciences.

KIEV - DONETS..... 6 days 16
Ukrainian center of geographic research. Major industrial area.

MOSCOW..... 4 days
Final visits and departure.

It should be noted that Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev have no alternates named because the main centers of geographic work are there and these cities will presumably, from the Soviet point of view, be a "must" in any schedule.

*These areas and their alternate areas are essential for a net intelligence gain. Removal of all four areas would reduce the program to an undesirable level.

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VI. Suggested Itinerary in the United States*

NEW YORK CITY (Arrival Point)..... 4 days
Urban geography of a great metropolis, including
port facilities, community industries, mass trans-
portation, and zonation. American Geographical
Society. Department of Geography, Hunter College.

TRANSCONTINENTAL AIR TRAVEL, New York to Los Angeles...1 day
Daytime travel -- broad utilization patterns can
often be observed from the air.

LOS ANGELES AND ENVIRONS..... 9 days
Annual Conference of the Association of American
Geographers, August 19-22, at Santa Monica. Showplace
of urbanization; special attention to trend in
decentralization and vast extent because of indi-
vidual homes. Highly developed road network in an
automobile age. Intense agriculture: fruit and
vegetables in an irrigated area. Department of
Geography, UCLA.

SOUTHERN NEVADA - NORTHERN ARIZONA..... 5 days
Boulder Dam and Lake Meade. Grand Canyon of the
Colorado.

DENVER..... 5 days
Federal programs for arid and semiarid regions.
Great Plains and Rocky Mountain landscapes. Side
trips to Estes Park, Big Thompson tunnel, etc.

CHICAGO..... 6 days
Tours of the city featuring merchandising, port
facilities for inland waterways, urban redevelopment,
steel mill, grain exchange, etc. Side trip west into
a typical Corn Belt community. Department of Geography,
University of Chicago. Department of Geography,
Northwestern University.

*Times given include travel time, except for New York to Los Angeles
air trip.

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MADISON..... 4 days
Example of a small American city. Short side trips
to see Dairy Belt agriculture and glacial topography.
Department of Geography, University of Wisconsin.

MINNEAPOLIS - ST. PAUL..... 5 days
Example of twin-city development; also flour milling
center. Side trip west to typical Spring Wheat
communities. Side trip north to Mesabi Iron Range,
through lake-and-forest type of landscape.

KANSAS CITY..... 4 days
Example of a typical mid-West city; stockyards and
meat packing. Side trip west into Winter Wheat
Region type of agriculture.

HOUSTON..... 5 days
Example of rapidly growing city -- port, oil,
grain, cotton. Side trip to East Texas oil field;
also cotton belt type of economy. Example of Gulf
Coast type of landscape and economy.

TENNESSEE VALLEY (Knoxville as center)..... 6 days
Coordinated resource planning by a regional agency;
water power, navigation, flood control, soil con-
servation, rural electrification, and recreation.
Side trips to view the landscape of several types
of Southeast U.S. regions: Great Valley, Southern
Appalachians, Piedmont.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 5 days
Federal geography programs, including resource use,
reclamation service, agricultural research, cartography,
and map reproduction. National Academy of Sciences and
National Research Council. Library of Congress.
Government Buildings.

NEW YORK CITY (Point of departure).....1 day
Free time during day for shopping, sightseeing, etc.,
and leave in the evening.

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Suggested Alternates for Above Points

NEW YORK CITY

No alternate thought necessary other than shortening or lengthening of visit in the city.

LOS ANGELES

A visit to this city is imperative if geographers are to attend the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers at Santa Monica for four days. Otherwise, visit to area could be shortened. Also, time could be taken from the Los Angeles area to visit Imperial Valley as an unusual agricultural region.

SOUTHERN NEVADA - NORTHERN ARIZONA

Alternate visit to southwestern Utah: striking high plateau topography including National Parks and typical small communities in the semi-arid Great Basin.

DENVER

Alternate visit to the Salt Lake City - Provo area as a classic example of irrigation in a semi-arid region. Also examples of faulted landforms.

CHICAGO

No complete alternative recommended. Length of stay could be limited to visits to the Departments of Geography at the University of Chicago and Northwestern University, and any tours arranged by courtesy of these institutions.

MADISON

Alternate stop in Omaha-Lincoln area as a Corn Belt center and for the importance of slaughter houses. Visit to the Department of Geography, University of Nebraska.

MINNEAPOLIS - ST. PAUL

Alternate visit to the Ohio River valley from Louisville to Cincinnati, with a side trip to the Blue Grass Region in Kentucky.

KANSAS CITY

Alternate visit to St. Louis as a Mississippi River metropolis with side trip to Memphis as a cotton-marketing center and example of delta land agriculture.

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HOUSTON

Alternate visit to Tulsa, example of modern urban development and as an oil and grain regional center. Side trip to an Oklahoma Oil District.

TENNESSEE VALLEY

Alternate visit to Birmingham as a classic example of an industrial center adjacent to the resources for manufacturing iron and steel. Also side trip to cotton lands and coniferous forests in the Deep South.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

No alternates recommended.

Other Alternate Areas of Geographic Interest

1. PHOENIX and the SALT RIVER VALLEY

Fast growing city in the American Southwest. Example of intensive irrigation development, including long staple cotton.

2. PITTSBURGH - CANTON

Example of a metropolis specializing in heavy industry. Industrial landscape in environs -- between Pittsburgh and Canton. Topography of the Alleghany Plateau.

3. PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Note: The northwestern part of the U.S. was omitted from the preceding itinerary suggestions because of the impossibility of visiting all parts of the country in a limited amount of time. It could be substituted for one of the agricultural visits in the mid-West.

The Seattle-Tacoma area and Puget Sound. Landscapes of the Pacific Northwest including the Cascade Mountains. Forestry resources, management, and operations. Possible side trip to the Grand Coulee to illustrate dry land reclamation. Department of Geography, University of Washington.

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